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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/31/2010

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SUBJECT: MOSTLY OLD GUARD IN NEW GOZ APPOINTMENTS

Classified By: Ambassador Christopher W. Dell under Section 1.4 b/d

¶1. (U) Following the swearing in of all 150 new members of Parliament on April 12, legislators elected ZANU-PF Party Chairman John Nkomo as Speaker and Mashonaland West ZANU-PF stalwart Edna Madzongwe as Deputy Speaker. Nkomo replaces Emmerson Mnangagwa, who lost his parliamentary race last month but was named by President Mugabe on April 11 as one of the Parliament's 30 non-constituency MPs. Despite threats to boycott, all 41 of the elected MDC MPs joined in the swearing-in.

¶2. (U) Joining Mnangagwa as non-constituency MPs were outgoing ministers Patrick Chinamasa (Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs), Amos Midzi (Energy and Power Development), Paul Mangwana (Public Service, Labor, and Social Welfare), and Samuel Mumbengegwi (Industry and International Trade), each of whom either lost in ZANU-PF primary contests or chose not to run. The rest of the thirty are generally lock-step Mugabe loyalists and include hardliners such as Willard Chiwewe, former permanent secretary of Foreign Affairs who caused a diplomatic incident

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in 2001 when he threatened violence against staff at Western embassies.

¶3. (U) The GOZ on April 11 also announced Mugabe's appointments for provincial governors, who comprise ten of the President's 30 parliamentary appointments. Four of the governors appointed are first-time governors; the other six are reappointments. Ten chiefs, all ruling party loyalists led by outgoing Deputy Minister of Local Government Chief Fortune Charumbira, round out the 30 presidential parliamentary appointments.

¶4. (C) COMMENT: The appointments reflect the continued ascendancy of the Mujuru/Zezuru faction within ZANU-PF and appear to do little to appease disaffected Karanga and Young Turk elements. Apparent losers, such as moderate outgoing Masvingo Governor Josiah Hungwe, previously the longest-serving provincial governor, are aligned with Mnangagwa, who in spite of being tossed a crumb is clearly out of favor. The appointments further confirm that die-hard loyalty to Robert Mugabe is the chief criterion for advancement in today's Zimbabwe. They also offer little hope for new directions within the regime as Mugabe is relying on the same basic cast of characters who have been the architects and implementers of his repressive policies over the last five years.

Dell